

THE
MONK and MILLER'S WIFE;

OR,
A' PARTIES PLEAS'D;

AN UNCO TALE.

BY ALLAN RAMSAY.

A NEW EDITION CORRECTED.

Tell them who cry "this Tale is old,"

A better never yet was told.

GLASGOW:

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Brash & Reid.

Now lend your lugs, ye benders fine,
Wha ken the benefit of wine;
And you wha faughing, kaud brown ale,
Leave jinks a wee and hear a tale.

An honest Miller dwall'd in Fife,
That had a young and wanton Wife,
Wha sometimes thair'd the parish Priest
To mak her man a two-horn'd beast:

He paid right mony visits till her,
 And to keep in with Hab the Miller,
 He endeavour'd aft to make him happy,
 Where'er he kend the ale was nappy.
 Such condefcenfion in a pafter,
 Knit Halbert's love to him the fafter;
 And by his converse, troth 'tis true,
 Hab learn'd to preach when he was fou.
 Thus all the three were wond'rous pleas'd,
 The wife well ferv'd, the man well eas'd,
 Hab ground his corn, the Priest did cherish
 Himfelf with dining round the parifh.
 Befs, the goodwife, thought it nae fkaith,
 Since fhe was fit, to ferve them baith.

When equal is the night and day,
 And Ceres gives the fchools the play,
 A youth fprung from a gentle *pater*
 Bred at St. Andrew's *alma mater*,
 Ae day gawn hameward, it fell late,
 And him benighted by the gate:
 To lie without, pit-mirk did fhore him,
 He coudna fee his thumb before him;
 But, clack—clack—clack, he heard a mill,
 Which led him by the lugs theretill.
 To take the thread of tale along,
 This mill to Halbert did belang,
 Nor lefs this note your notice claims,
 The fcholar's name was Mafter James.

Now, fmiling-mufe, the prelude paft,
 Smoothly relate, a tale fhall laft
 As lang as Alps and Grampian hills,
 As lang as wind or water mills.

In enter'd James, Hab faw and kend him,
 And offer'd kindly to befriend him
 With fic good cheer as he cou'd make,
 Baith for his ain and father's fake.
 The fcholar thought himfelf right fped,
 And gave him thanks in terms well-bred.

Quoth Hab, "I canna leave my mill
 "As yet;—but stap ye wast the kill
 "A bow-shot, and ye'll find my hame:
 "Gae warm ye, and crack with our dame,
 "'Till I set aff the mill, syne we
 "Shall tak what Bessy has to gi'e."

James, in return, what's handsome said,
 O'er lang to tell; and aff he gade.
 Out of the house some light did shine,
 Which led him till't as with a line:

Arriv'd, he knock'd,—for doors were steekit;—
 Straight through a window Bessy keekit,
 And cries, 'Wha's that gi'es fowk a fright
 'At sic untimous time of night?'

James, with good humour, most discreetly,
 Told her his circumstance completely.

'I dinna ken ye,' quoth the Wife,
 'And up and down the thieves are rife;
 'Within my lane, I am but a woman,
 'Sae I'll unbar my door to nae man;—
 'But since 'tis very like, my dow,
 'That all ye're telling may be true,
 'Hae, there's a key, gang in your way
 'At the neist door,—there's braw ait strae;—
 'Streek down upon't my lad, and learn
 'They're no ill lodg'd wha get a barn.'

Thus, after meikle clitter clatter,
 James fand he cou'dna mend the matter;
 And since it might na better be,
 With resignation took the key,
 Unlock'd the barn—clamb up the mou,
 Where was an opening near the hou,
 Throw which he saw a glint of light
 That gave diversion to his sight:
 By this he quickly cou'd discern
 A thin wa' separate house and barn,
 And through this rive was in the wa',
 All done within the house he saw:

He saw (what ought not to be seen,
 And scarce gied credit to his een)
 The parish priest of reverend fame
 In active courtship with the dame—
 To lengthen out description here,
 Wou'd but offend the modest ear,
 And beet the lewder youthfu' flame,
 Which we by satire strive to tame.
 Suppose the wicked action o'er,
 And James continuing still to glowr:
 He saw the wife as fast as able,
 Spread a clean servite on the table,
 And syne, frae the ha' ingle bring ben
 A piping-het young roasted hen,
 And twa good bottles stout and clear,
 Ane of strong ale, and ane of beer.

But wicked luck, just as the priest
 Shot in his fork in chucky's breast,
 Th' unwelcome Miller gied a roar,
 Cry'd, "Bessy, haste ye open the door!"—
 With that the haly letcher fled,
 And darn'd himsell behint a bed;
 While Bessy huddl'd a' things by,
 That nought the cuckold might espy;
 Syne loot him in,—but out of tune
 Speer'd why he left the mill sae soon;
 "I come," said he, "as manners blains,
 "To wait and crack wi' Master James,
 "Which I shou'd do, tho' ne'er sae bissy;
 "I sent him here, goodwife, where is he?"
 'Ye sent him here!' (quoeth Bessy grumbling)
 'Kend I this James!—A chiel came rumbling,
 'But how was I assur'd, when dark,
 'That he had been nae thievish spark,
 'Or some rude wench, gotten a dose,
 'That a weak wife cou'd ill oppose?'
 "But what came of him? speak nae langer,"
 Cries Halbert, in a Highland anger.

“ I sent him to the barn,” quoth she:—
 “ Gae quickly bring him in,” quoth he.

James was brought in—the Wife was bawked—
 The Priest stood close—the Miller cracked—
 Syne speer’d his sulky gloomy spouse,
 What supper she had in the house,
 That might be suitable to gi’e
 Ane of their lodger’s quality?

Quoth she, “ Ye may well ken, good-man,
 ‘ Your feast comes frae the parritch-pan:
 ‘ The stov’d or roasted we afford,
 ‘ Are aft great strangers on our board.’
 “ Parritch,” quoth Hab, “ ye senseless tawpie!
 “ Think ye this Youth’s a gilly-gawpy;
 “ Or that his gentle stamock’s master
 “ To worry up a pint of plaister,
 “ Like our mill knaves that lift the laiding,
 “ Whase kytes can rax out like raw plaiding,
 “ Swith, roast a hen, or fry some chickens,
 “ And send for ale frae Maggy Picken’s.”
 ‘ Aye, aye,’ quoth she, ‘ ye may well ken,
 ‘ ’Tis ill brought but that’s no there ben;
 ‘ Whan but last owk, nae farder gane,
 ‘ The laird got a’ to pay his kain.’

Then James, wha had as good a guess
 Of what was in the house as Bess,
 With pawky smile this plea to end,
 To please himsell, and ease his friend,
 First open’d with a flee oration
 His wond’rous skill in conjuration.
 Said he,—“ By this fell art I’m able
 ‘ To whop aff any great man’s table
 ‘ Whate’er I like to make a mail o’
 ‘ Either in part, or yet the hail o’;
 ‘ And, if ye please, I’ll shaw my art.’—
 Cries Halbert—“ Faith, with a’ my heart!”—
 Bess sain’d hersell,—cry’d ‘ Lord, be here!’
 And near hand fell a swoon wi’ fear.

James leugh,—and bade her naething dread;
 Syne to conjuring went with speed:
 And first he drew a circle round,
 Then utter'd many a magic sound
 Of words, part Latin, Geesh, and Dutch,
 Enough to fright a very witch:
 That done, James says, ‘ Now, now, ’tis come,
 ‘ And in the boal beside the luma;
 ‘ Now set the board: goodwife, gae ben,
 ‘ Bring frae yon boal a roasted hen.’
 She wadna gang, but Habbie ventur’d;
 And soon as he the ambrie enter’d,
 It smell’d sae well, short time he sought it,
 But, wond’ring, ’tween his hands he brought it.
 He view’d it round, and thrice he smell’d it,
 Syne with a gentle touch he felt it.
 Thus ilka sense he did convene,
 Left glamour had beguil’d his een:
 They all, in an united body,
 Declar’d it a fine fat how towdy.
 “ Nae mair about it,” quoth the Miller,
 “ The hen looks well, and we’ll sa’ till her.”
 “ Sae be’t,” says James; and in a doup,
 They snapt her up baith froup and roup.
 “ Neist,” O! cries Halbert, “ cou’d your skill
 “ But help us to a waught of ale,
 “ I’d be oblig’d t’ ye a’ my life,
 “ And offer to the deil my wife,
 “ To see if he’ll disreeter mak her,
 “ But, O I’m ficed he winna tak her!”
 Said James, ‘ Ye offer very fair;
 ‘ The bargain’s hadden, say nae mair.’
 Then thrice James shook a willow-wand,
 With kittle words thrice gave command;
 That done, with looks baith learn’d and grave,
 Said, ‘ Now ye’ll get what ye wou’d have;
 ‘ Twa bottles of ae nappy liquor
 ‘ As ever ream’d in horn or bicquor;

' Ahint the ark that hads your meal,
 ' Ye'll find twa standing corket weel.
 James said, syne fast the Miller flew,
 And frae their nest the bottles drew;
 Then first the scholar's health he toasted,
 Wha's magic gart him feed on roasted;
 His father's next,—syne a' the rest
 Of his good friends that wish'd him best,
 Greatly o'er langsome at this time,
 In a short tale to put in rhyme.

Thus, while the Miller and the Youth,
 Were blythly stock'ning of their drowth,
 Bels fretting, scarcely held frae greeting,
 The Priest, enclos'd, stood vex'd and sweating.

" O wow!" said Hab, " if ane might speer,
 " Dear Master James, wha brought our cheer?

" Sic laits appear to us sae awfu',
 " We hardly think your learning lawfu'."

' To bring your doubts to a conclusion,'

Says James, ' ken I'm a Rosicrucian,

' Ane of the set that never carries

' On traffie with black deils or fairies;

' There's mony a sp'rit that's no a deil,

' That constantly around us wheel.

' There was a sage call'd Albumazor,

' Who's wit was gleg as ony razor:

' Frae this great man we learn'd the skill

' To bring these gentry to our will;

' And they appear, when we've a mind,

' In ony shape of human kind.

' Now, if you'll drap your foolish fear,

' I'll gar my *Paralet* appear.'

Hab sidg'd and leugh, his elbuck clew,

Baith fear'd and send a sp'rit to view:

At last his courage wan the day,

He to the scholar's will gave way.

Bessy by this began to smell

A rat, but kept her mind to'r sell:

She pray'd like howdy in her drink,
 But meantime tipt young James a wink.
 James frae his eye an answer sent,
 Which made the wife right well content :
 Then turn'd to Hab, and thus advis'd :
 ' Whate'er you see, be nought surpriz'd,
 ' And for your saul, move not your tongue,
 ' But ready stand with a great rung ;
 ' Syne as the sp'rit gangs marching out,
 ' Be sure to lend him a sound rout :
 ' I bidna this by way of mocking,
 ' For nought delights him mair than knocking.'

Hab got a kent—stood by the hallan,
 And straight the wild mischievous Callan
 Cries, '*Rudamanthus Husky Adingo,*
 '*Monk Horner, Hipock, Jinko, Jingo,*
 '*Appear in likeness of a Priest,*
 '*No like a deil in shape of beast,*
 '*With gaping chafits to fleg us a' :*
 '*Wauk forth, the door stands to the wa'.'*

Then frae the hole where he was pent,
 The Priest approach'd, right well content ;
 With silent pace strade o'er the floor,
 'Till he was drawing near the door ;
 Then to escape the cudgel ran,
 But was not miss'd by the goodman,
 Wha lent him on the neck a lounder,
 That gart him o'er the threshold founder.
 Darkness soon hid him frae their sight :
 Ben slew the Miller in a fright ;
 " I trow," guoth he, " I laid well on ;
 " But woe he's like our ain Mefs John ! "



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